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The inclusion of non-Western artistic traditions in cultural policy: contrasting social justice and public diplomacy approaches (ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT)

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Abstract

On both sides of the Atlantic, the dissemination of non-Western artistic traditions among the general public has been hampered by the prevalence of Eurocentric aesthetic standards in cultural institutions and organizations. In recent years, however, some states have taken steps in order to increase the exposure of immigrant-origin artists in a variety of disciplines, including theatre, music, dance, literature, cinema and visual arts. This article offers a systematic comparison of two such initiatives that have been developed at the national level: the Equity Office of the Canada Council for the Arts and Spain's network of cultural 'Houses' (*Red de Casas*). While the former was assigned a social justice mandate, the latter was created to further foreign policy goals through public diplomacy. These diverging approaches have created distinct funding opportunities, policy instruments and structural outcomes, with important implications for processes of artistic segregation and mainstreaming.

Keywords: migration, minority artists, racism, Eurocentrism, intercultural dialogue, foreign policy, positive action

1. Introduction

In a Western context of increasing ethnic diversity and institutional concern about related discriminations and conflicts (Solanes Corella 2015), cultural policy has recently come to be seen as a key instrument in the overall governance of immigrant integration (Council of Europe 2005: 4; Council of Europe 2008: 47). At the theoretical level, the underlying premise that ‘intercultural dialogue’ will reduce widespread prejudices (Zick, Pettigrew & Wagner 2008) finds support in a growing body of research showing how artistic representations can invest national and other collective identities with new meanings and value (Mari & Shvanyukova 2015; McCormick 2014; Salzbrunn 2014; Chacko 2013; Dotson-Renta 2012). To achieve this, cultural studies scholars have long highlighted the importance of foregrounding the perspectives of marginalized cultural producers, whose personal experiences facilitate the substitution of stereotypical portrayals by complex and individualizing ones (Hall 1996; Stam 2001).

For immigrant-origin artists whose identities and practices are rooted in non-Western traditions, however, gaining access to a wide audience involves overcoming two interrelated obstacles: the lack of demographic representativeness of cultural gatekeepers and their often Eurocentric and nationalist notions of aesthetic merit (Sievers 2008; Grassilli 2008; Zapata-Barrero 2014; Delhaye 2008). Intercultural dialogue, which can be understood as a form of positive action in cultural policy, aims to reverse these trends in various ways, including the establishment of arts councils supporting minority communities; the diversification of management and staff in public cultural organizations; the regulation and negotiation of performance agreements with private ones; fellowships, mentoring and training schemes for foreign-origin creators;

and international cooperation through cultural institutes specializing in the organization of artistic events (European Union 2014; Cliche 2010: 51).

Based on documentary sources and informal discussions with officials,¹ this article seeks to compare the origins, institutionalization and predictable impact of two qualitatively distinct approaches to state support for non-Western artistic traditions. The first approach, developed as part of a social justice agenda, is analysed through a specialized Equity Office operating within Canada's main arts funding body. The second approach, framed and institutionalized in terms of public diplomacy, is exemplified by Spain's network of cultural 'Houses' (*Red de Casas*), a Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiative to enhance cooperation with different world regions or civilizations. There are a number of reasons why these institutions offer an attractive starting point for comparative research. Most importantly, they share a basic concern for the incorporation of foreign-origin creators in the national artistic field. Therefore, their respective strengths and limitations may suggest fruitful ways of building on the synergies –and preventing the contradictions– between anti-racism and foreign policy. Secondly, they illustrate the complex relationship among diversification, segregation and mainstreaming processes taking place at the level of cultural institutions, organizations, producers and publics. Thirdly, they have benefited from considerable political support: Canada is widely regarded as a leader in the protection of cultural rights (Kymlicka 2015; Bosset, Gamper & Öhlinger 2013), whereas Spain pioneered the first UN-led initiative in the area of arts-based international cooperation (more on this below). The fact that both states host significant numbers of non-European immigrants (OECD 2016: 246, 302)² and that Canada's have been settled for a much longer period also offers an opportunity to explore the interplay between integration processes and policy dynamics.

The next section lays out a theoretical framework intended to illuminate the potential trade-offs involved in different approaches to cultural diversification. Section 3 contextualizes the creation of corresponding institutions and describes their ideological ethos, mode of governance and resources. Section 4 addresses their outputs and structural outcomes, focusing on the exposure of the general public to the work produced by immigrant-origin (as well as foreign) artists. The conclusion signals key pathways for theorizing the inclusion of non-Western artistic traditions in cultural policy.

2. Dilemmas and trade-offs in the articulation of cultural policy and cultural diversity

States that seek to make their cultural policies more responsive to cultural diversity, including by supporting immigrant-origin artists, can be regarded as facing a number of dilemmas. First comes the need to devise a politically attractive rationale for injecting new resources in an area of state intervention that typically ranks low in spending priorities. With the multiplication of ‘cultural citizens’ who try to bend the state’s involvement in the artistic field to particular purposes (Zapata-Barrero 2015: 4), cultural institutions have already been mandated to promote civic participation, social cohesion and mental health, but also more strategic objectives such as urban renewal, tourism, industrial exports and diplomacy (McGuigan 2004; McCarthy et al. 2005; Andrew et al. 2005; Pyykönen 2012; Van Ham 2010; Clavier & Kauppinen 2014). Social justice rationales for cultural diversification run the risk of bumping up against the wall of far-right xenophobia and multicultural backlash (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010; Delahaye

2008; Sievers 2014), but strategic ones could deprive it of its moral appeal and dilute its anti-racist dimension.

At the same time, the rise of neoliberal ideology (Rose & Miller 1992) has created the expectation that governments should team up with a variety of stakeholders, such as consumers and philanthropists, when sponsoring artistic activities (McGuigan 2005; for an illustration, see Brook 2014). Research suggests that markets offer stronger incentives for cultural diversification than bureaucracies (Martiniello 2003; Delhay 2008) but sometimes encourage the segregation of ethnic and native circuits (Martiniello 2014; Delhay & Van der Ven 2014; Baily & Collyer 2006). The impact of other patrons on the nature and dissemination of non-Western arts depends on their agenda's alignment with specific forms of 'cultural entrepreneurship' (Parzer & Kwok 2013). These can be categorized according to their degree of focus on cultural alterity vs. familiarity and cultural hybridity vs. originality (or prototypicality). Whereas some entrepreneurs seek to 'merge' cultures by bringing various traditions together, others 'bridge' them by exposing a diverse public to a single tradition. A third type aims to 'protect' a tradition to be enjoyed within its own community, whereas a fourth 'dissolves' boundaries by highlighting cross-cultural similarities. One could hypothesize that immigrant-origin artists who mainly rely on sending country resources will tend to protect and bridge cultures, whereas those with plenty of local capital will be in a better position to merge and dissolve them. Another way of looking at their production is as a vehicle for political claims, whose radicalism may be inversely proportional to state and corporate subsidies (Martiniello 2008; Sievers 2008; Grassilli 2008).

The aesthetic, thematic and ideological variety of works produced by immigrant-origin artists raises the conundrum of developing an operational definition of "non-

Western” or “ethnic” arts for the purpose of positive action. Since all identities are chosen and ascribed in contingent and disputed ways, administrative decisions regarding who and what belongs to a given cultural category necessarily involve a more or less conscious exercise of symbolic power. If the target is too broad, it risks including work by artists who do not draw on their foreign background in their creative activity, which limits its potential impact on racist attitudes. If it is too narrow, it might neglect atypical migration and integration experiences and contribute to the perpetuation of monolithic and traditionalist representations of cultural groups.

Finally, authorities have to consider how much weight prevailing notions of aesthetic merit are to retain alongside other criteria for the adjudication of public funds (Gray 2007). Relatedly, they have to decide whether to create specialized arts institutions and organizations or reform existing ones to make them more supportive of immigrant-origin artists. Whereas too much aesthetic focus and mainstreaming (in the sense of attributing responsibility for positive action to established cultural institutions) may exclude artistic expressions that clearly depart from hegemonic standards, too little can relegate them to secondary or niche circuits and reduce their audience (Costanzo & Zibouh 2014).

With these analytical dimensions in mind, we now proceed to examine the ways in which the Equity Office of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Spanish network of “Houses” have attempted to increase the visibility of non-Western artistic traditions.

3. Institutionalizing the social justice and public diplomacy approaches to cultural diversification

The Equity Office of the Canada Council for the Arts was set up in 1991, following the recommendation of an advisory committee appointed by the Council director to develop a strategy toward cultural diversity. Four years earlier, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act had enshrined in law the multiculturalism policy officially adopted in 1971, imposing a duty on government to ‘foster the recognition and appreciation of the diverse cultures of Canadian society and promote the reflection and evolving expressions of those cultures’. All federal institutions were called upon to ‘ensure that Canadians of all origins have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and advancement in those institutions’, as well as ‘promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the ability of individuals and communities of all origins to contribute to the continuing evolution of Canada’ (Canadian Multiculturalism Act 1985). The Act thus provided a strong political mandate for the involvement of arts institutions in integration issues.

In its final report, the Canada Council’s advisory committee criticized granting procedures for privileging classical European art forms, underutilizing ethnic minorities in peer assessment committees and requiring recipients to adhere to a strict conception of professionalism. In response, it recommended hiring a racial equity officer for a minimum of two years, with the mandate to research, develop, supervise and administer organizational reform. Despite the fact that their creation and maintenance fell under the discretion of Council directors, in turn appointed by the Minister of Canadian Heritage and approved by an autonomous board, both the equity unit and the advisory committee have endured to this day (Fatona 2011; Attariwala 2013). In its 2011-2016 strategic plan, the Council reiterated its commitment to maintain diversity and equity within its top five priorities, along with support for individual artists, arts organizations, partnerships with other stakeholders and institutional reform (Canada Council 2011).

As of April 2016,³ the Canada Council website described the Equity Office as supporting Canadian artists of African, Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American or mixed racial heritage, as well as working with the Aboriginal Arts Office, disabled artists and official minority language communities (i.e. French and English speakers outside the regions where they predominate). This is done mainly through the administration of earmarked grants for these sectors of the population (henceforth labelled ‘minorities’). The Office also provides expertise for the Council’s disciplinary sections on dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual arts, writing and publishing and inter-arts, which manage the bulk of subsidies. In particular, it helps them remove built-in biases from evaluation procedures, drawing on its own research and public consultations.

In Spain, by contrast, ethnic and racial equity has not yet been included among the objectives of state support for the arts, reflecting a generally weak legal framework for the protection of migrant rights (Huddleston et. al. 2015; De Lucas & Añón 2013). While the Ministry of Culture’s 2012-2015 strategic plan hinted at the social benefits of cultural policy, which was expected to ‘articulate citizenship and foster social cohesion’, none of the related measures mentioned immigrant-origin artists (passing references to intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity conceived minorities as arts consumers rather than producers). Nor did these artists receive any attention in the 2015 granting schemes of the National Institute of Performing Arts and Music,⁴ the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts⁵ and the General Directorate of Cultural Industries and Policy and Books.⁶ Since 2007, Spanish authorities have drawn up two comprehensive plans on immigrant integration and one on anti-racism (Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración 2007, 2011a, 2011b), but these largely focused on social policy

(education, employment, health, housing, sports) and failed to include the arts among their main areas of intervention.

While reluctant to link cultural policy and immigrant integration, the central government has taken the lead in promoting intercultural dialogue at the global level. In 2005, in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent 'war against terror', it co-sponsored with Turkey the UN-led Alliance of Civilizations, a project to 'establish a paradigm of mutual respect between civilizations and cultures' and overcome the 'mutual suspicion, fear and misunderstanding between Islamic and Western societies' (United Nations 2006: 47). An expert panel was set up to make recommendations to the international community, which included the establishment of a cultural fund to support young Muslim artists and facilitate the dissemination of contemporary Muslim culture (ibid: 37). In 2008, Spain's Council of Ministers adopted its National Plan for the Alliance of Civilizations, announcing its intention to develop the Foreign Ministry's network of cultural Houses. Each of these specialized in a specific continent or civilization: Africa House, America House, Arab House, Asia House and Sefarad-Israel House.

As it is, some of the Houses predated the Alliance of Civilizations and the global concern about Christian-Muslim relations. America House materialized in 1990, ahead of the commemoration of Columbus' travel to America, and Asia House was established in 2001. The precise motivations that lied behind these initiatives cannot be adequately addressed here, but the consolidation of economic ties appears like a plausible candidate, together with the promotion of the Spanish language (for the former). By contrast, the geopolitical context played a key role in the 2006 expansion that gave birth to Africa House, Arab House and Sefarad-Israel House, which were joined by Mediterranean House in 2009. On the inauguration of Arab House and Africa

House, King Juan Carlos respectively made a plea to ‘fight prejudices and exclusive conceptions’ (El Mundo 2008) and stressed the ‘serious’ social, economic and political problems that led African youths to ‘embark on the adventure of an often tragic emigration’ (Europa Press 2007).

All House boards comprise a mix of representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, autonomous communities and city councils. The relative weight of the Foreign Ministry ranges from a fourth of voting rights (in the case of Asia House) to an absolute majority (Africa House, Sefarad-Israel House, Arab House and Mediterranean House). America House comes in between, with a third of board members being nominated by the Ministry and Madrid’s local and regional governments. Unlike those of the Canada Council, who are appointed for fixed 4-year terms, House board members can be replaced at any time and without peer approval, meaning they enjoy no independence from the executive.

The Houses’ founding statutes enounce the broad mission of fostering mutual knowledge and cooperation between Spain and their respective region of focus. The cultural dimension is explicitly emphasized: for instance, America House is divided into the *Ateneo*, which organizes cultural and artistic events, and the American Platform (*Tribuna Americana*), devoted to economic, institutional and scientific meetings. Similarly, Sefarad-Israel House is entrusted to ‘promote a greater presence of the Jewish – and particularly Sephardic – culture in all fields’; both Asia House and Arab House are instructed to assemble collections of foreign books, music and films. The underlying rationale is that culture can be put to the service of public diplomacy in order to secure economic and political gains on the international stage. When asked about the proportion of resources devoted to cultural, economic and political activities, an ex Arab House director thus answers: ‘A third, a third and a third: everything is

synergistic', before acknowledging that the House's financial participation is generally higher in cultural than other kinds of activities. The arts are clearly framed in terms of soft power: at Arab House, for instance, cultural exhibitions are often used as a 'treat' for foreign politicians (personal communication). As we will see, however, this strategic rationale sits oddly with the fact that most cultural activities have focused on disseminating foreign arts in Spanish society rather than the other way around, hinting at implicit social objectives wrapped up in diplomatic rhetoric.

In 2013-14, the Equity Office of the Canada Council for the Arts awarded \$1 571 000 in grants, which made up 1,1% of total Council subsidies (Canada Council 2014). This amount and proportion had remained virtually unchanged during the previous 15 years, which is especially noteworthy given the substitution of the long-ruling Liberal Party by a conservative government in 2006. This being said, a reform in 2011-2012 expanded the Office's beneficiaries to include disabled artists, who received \$470 000 in grants – nearly a third of the Office's budget (Canada Council 2011). Since total subsidies remained more or less stable in the following years, this has meant a significant net loss for immigrant-origin applicants.

Like the Canada Council, the Houses are mostly funded through a parliament-approved annual subsidy channelled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (rather than Culture). Since they do not engage exclusively in cultural activities, their relative financial clout is difficult to estimate. On the conservative hypothesis that a third of the funds transferred in 2015 were devoted to cultural activities, they would add up to approximately €2,2 million (see Table 1). To make a rough comparison, this would represent nearly 6% of the €34,7 million offered in state grants for artists and cultural organizations⁷, multiplying six-fold the weight of the equity dimension within Canada Council programmes.

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

Another important difference is that House subsidies have been much more sensitive to the changing economic and political context. Transfers stayed roughly even between 2007 and 2010 before falling moderately in 2011, in the midst of a deep recession and swelling unemployment. In 2012, after the conservative electoral victory, they were slashed to half their previous level, where they have remained ever since. The residual subsidies of local and regional authorities followed the same pattern, to the point that some (most notably the city of Madrid) suspended their contribution completely.

A closer look at the evolution of individual House budgets reveals important variations within this general trend. On the one hand, all of the funds transferred to Asia House, America House and Mediterranean House are earmarked as development aid; Africa House also receives a majority of development aid. Arab House and Sefarad-Israel Centre, however, are conceived as equally involved in development and foreign (i.e. geopolitical) action. This suggests that Arab House, Sefarad-Israel Centre and, to a lesser extent, Africa House are seen as more vital for Spain's geopolitical interests. According to the 2015 annual budget, 'the political, social and security stability of Maghrebi states is a priority' that should be addressed through the House network (Gobierno de España 2015: 89). On the other hand, Arab House received by far the greatest amount of foreign action funding (peaking at €5 000 000 in 2008, compared to €1 000 000 for Sefarad-Israel Centre and €300 000 for Africa House) under the socialist government. However, it suffered the most drastic cut following the conservative takeover. Given persisting concerns about the stability of Arab countries, the fall is likely to have stemmed from the conservatives' lesser faith in the effectiveness of intercultural dialogue as a means of addressing security threats.

As semi-autonomous public corporations, both the Canada Council and the Houses have the legal capacity to receive private donations (the Canada Council does not disclose the identity of its donors). However, not all Houses have been equally successful in this field. While Asia and America House have lured a number of Spanish multinationals⁸ to their boards of trustees, their counterparts do not currently declare any regular corporate sponsors. A more in-depth study could shed light on the respective influence of corporate priorities and House experience in the configuration of such disparities, but the presence of large emerging markets in Asia and America have almost certainly played a key role.

4. A comparative analysis of policy outputs and outcomes

As the foregoing presentation makes clear, the Equity Office and the network of Houses differ considerably in their socio-political origins, mission, governance and resources. This section analyzes the way in which the resulting opportunity structure has shaped their activities and potential capacity to promote intercultural understanding through the arts.

Since the creation of its own earmarked subsidies at the turn of the millennium, the Equity Office has combined the tasks of directly supporting minority artists and collaborating with the Council's disciplinary sections in order to promote their fair treatment in general funding calls. While the effect of the latter interventions is difficult to determine, over \$9 million in general grants went to self-identified minority artists and organizations in 2013-2014 (in itself, the collection of such data sends a clear signal that diversity must be taken seriously across the whole organization). Since the Equity

Office distributed approximately \$1 million that year (Canada Council 2014), the vast majority of minority applicants received funding through general channels.

The nature of targeted subsidies have varied over time, but most programmes have focused on building the capacity of arts organizations with a significant proportion of minority members or a sustained interest in minority art forms. There have also been smaller, project-based grants for networking, international activities and intersectional initiatives (supporting, for instance, female and/or disabled immigrant-origin artists). In 2015, grants were restructured in two broad categories: organizational and sector development. The former aims to improve an organization's management, products, marketing, strategic planning and human resources, whereas the latter seeks to strengthen the broader artistic community through conferences, workshops, showcases, networking, mentorship and research. Annual grants could reach a maximum of \$20 000 for organizational development and \$25 000 for community projects (Canada Council website, 'Grants').

Applications are assessed by committees of peers, selected by the Office among established arts professionals. These are normally allowed to sit on a single committee every two years. Programme guidelines underline that a balance is sought with respect to members' artistic specialisation, gender, age, language, culture, region and abilities. Approximately a third of the evaluation is based on a project's capacity to impact on minority communities through the participation of their arts professionals, the advancement of their artistic practices and their engagement as arts consumers. All other things being equal, priority is also given to projects that are led by minority individuals or serve multiple 'equity-seeking' (i.e. disadvantaged) groups. Successful individuals and organizations are listed on the Council website, together with the amount received and their place of residence. In 2013, two thirds of recipients were

from Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver, reflecting the metropolitan concentration of Canadian immigrants.

While the Houses also support the work of immigrant-origin artists, they significantly differ from the Equity Office in the type of resources they put at their disposal and the procedure by which these are allocated. To put it succinctly, the Equity Office specializes in providing financial assistance to socially transformative, artistically promising and market-oriented cultural organizations; by contrast, the Houses mainly provide logistical support and visibility to individual artists, selected according to a number of unwritten and dynamic considerations which include aesthetic merit but also convenience, prestige, personal connections, ideology and nationality.

These divergences have wide-ranging consequences in terms of human resources and organizational complexity. At the time of writing, the Equity Office was a rather small team consisting of a coordinator, an administrative assistant and three officers with an artistic (and, for two of them, migrant) background (Canada Council website, 'Staff directory'). By contrast, the Houses employed over 100 workers⁹ in a variety of specialized units, such as communications, library, exhibitions, research, economy and institutional relations. As they lack any regular, large-scale granting programme, staff remuneration makes up over half of their expenses.

The Houses' elaborate infrastructure also distinguishes them from the Equity Office. All of their headquarters are located in rehabilitated patrimonial buildings that serve as venues for performances, exhibitions, screenings, conferences and presentations. America House is a case in point, with its exhibition room, cinema and 330-seat amphitheatre in a 19th-century palace that overlooks one of Madrid's most transited squares. Another Madrid palace, together with its gardens, was ceded by the city council to host the auditorium and exhibition rooms of Sefarad-Israel Centre. Arab

House and Asia House both have offices in Madrid as well as Córdoba (for the former) and Barcelona (for the latter). Africa House is headquartered in Las Palmas de Gran Canarias and Mediterranean House, in Alicante's former train station. According to House officials, capitalizing on these assets has become increasingly important in the face of dwindling funds for the organization of artistic events (personal communication).

Over the last years, the Houses have invested heavily in their Internet platforms with a view to overcome the limited reach of one-off, local events. In particular, their YouTube channels now feature a number of dance, theatre and music performances, as well as interviews with artists and guided tours of some exhibitions. This technological turn sits well with a growing rhetorical focus on the projection of Spanish soft power, difficult to reconcile with the Houses' location on national territory and predominantly non-European programming. This being said, it may also increase the visibility of non-Western cultural content for Spanish Internet users, especially younger ones, who have been targeted by promotional campaigns on social networks (personal communication).

Artists and projects that receive logistical and administrative support are usually chosen through a personalized assessment of 'fit' with the institution's strategic priorities and its partnerships with a range of stakeholders, such as foreign embassies and the cultural industry. In 2014, for instance, Arab House collaborated with an international dance festival by hosting a performance featuring five Arab-origin dancers residing in Madrid. The performance was described as an adaptation of artists' own choreographies, whose original language could help dispel stereotypes. A clothing brand, a conservatory and a dance company sponsored the event (Casa Árabe, 'HAABLK!'). In 2015, the same House and the Libyan embassy in Madrid organized an exhibition of paintings by Matug Aborawi, a Tripoli-born painter who had settled in

Granada ten years earlier. The first collection of works on display, entitled 'My dreams in Granada', portrayed the city in bright colours and light strokes, through the folklore-seeking eyes of the newcomer. The second collection, 'Tribute to the disappeared', captured the fate of African migrants landing on the shores of Andalusia and the Canary Islands. A third one, 'Tribute to the disappeared 2', was inspired by the Arab spring. In dark colours and blurred silhouettes, it expressed the descent into chaos and hopelessness and that followed the revolution (Casa Árabe, 'El sur y el sueño'; Jeune Afrique, 2015). In 2014, America House launched a crowdfunded album by Kati Dadá, a Haitian-Spanish singer and composer, with a concert introduced by a representative of the Haitian embassy. The album comprised seven songs in Spanish and creole, combining Western and Afro-Caribbean rhythms. According to the singer's own interpretation, the work sought to 'express feelings, sensations and experiences through the popular and ethnic songs of my two origins' (Casamérica 2014).

Importantly, however, a majority of House activities have promoted foreign creators rather than Spanish residents. Every year, for instance, America House hosts a number of book presentations in collaboration with Spanish publishers of Latin American authors. It also showcases foreign singers and filmmakers with the support of their respective embassies. One of Mediterranean House's flagship initiatives is an eponymous orchestra hosted in its headquarters, mostly made up of Spanish musicians but whose repertoire aims to introduce Mediterranean traditions to a broad audience of children and adults. Tickets for the first representations sold at an affordable 2€ per adult (Casa Mediterráneo, 'Se presenta en Alicante el Ensemble Casa Mediterráneo'). In 2014, Asia House organized the 13th edition of its music and dance festival in various Barcelona squares and venues, coinciding with the annual local festival. The mostly free performances featured artists from China, India, Japan, Iran, South Korea, Indonesia

and Pakistan, described as fusing traditional and contemporary influences. Sponsors included foreign cultural institutes, Spanish firms and the city council. The same year, it teamed up with a multiculturally branded movie theatre in Barcelona for the screening of independent Asian movies, both within a one-week festival and as part of its regular programming (Casa Asia, 2014). This international focus contrasts with the beneficiaries of the Equity Office, who have been selected exclusively among Canadian residents.

Beyond individual artists, the Equity Office and the network of Houses have differed in their level and mode of influence on cultural institutions and markets. Because of its incorporation and training mandate within an arts funding body, the Equity Office seems to have triggered a process of administrative learning and structural change in mainstream cultural policy. Between 2005 and 2013, the Canada Council's operating funding to minority arts organizations increased by 173,7% and the number of organizations supported jumped from 30 to 52 (Equity Office 2014: 4). This appears to have been achieved mainly through the diversification of peer assessment committees, a third of whose members came from minority communities in 2013 (Canada Council 2014: 18). By contrast, the Houses do not report any regular collaboration with Spanish arts funding bodies. Most of the administrative learning enabled by their activities has taken place among diplomats, frequently drawn upon for staffing and logistical assistance.

Regarding the cultural industry, the Equity Office has contributed to the emergence of self-sustaining arts organizations focusing on non-Western (and other minority) artistic practices. According to an external evaluation, 51% of the organizations supported by its first granting programme had achieved consolidated status after nine years (MDR Burgess Consultants 2011: 3). These had mainly used

grants to improve marketing, build partnerships, train young artists and purchase physical space. An important caveat is that selection criteria had favoured some disciplines, such as theatre and dance, at the expense of others, such as media arts, visual arts and music (ibid: 4). Conversely, the Houses have focused on consolidating their own status as diversity-enhancing arts organizations rather than on building a network of independent ones. From this perspective, the long-running cultural offer of the network's pioneers, America House and Asia House, suggests that they may prove rather successful. Since most of their partnerships with the cultural industry have served to tap the resources of established organizations, they have also provided incentives for those that do not specialize in non-Western arts to develop this market segment.

Finally, the Equity Office's decentralized approach based on the distribution of modest but numerous and predictable grants has aimed to foster intercultural encounters in a large number of venues throughout the national territory. Nonetheless, its lesser support for non-metropolitan organizations might have undermined its capacity to increase exposure to non-Western arts in sectors of the population with limited opportunities for face-to-face intergroup contact. The Houses face similar problems of outreach, being situated in a small number of large or mid-sized cities where immigrants tend to settle. In both cases, there is hope that virtual cultural consumption will gradually overcome geographical limitations: for instance, America House estimates that its websites receive 20 times as many visitors as its physical headquarters (personal communication). As drivers of public attitudes, of course, YouTube videos can hardly substitute in-person attendance to plays, concerts, exhibitions or dance performances.

5. Conclusion

While case studies do not provide for broad generalizations, a number of theoretically intriguing findings emerge from the foregoing analysis. At the contextual level, the social justice approach was catalysed by an explicit political commitment to the inclusion of immigrants and their descendants in social life and public administration. By contrast, the public diplomacy approach started to take shape before a comprehensive integration policy was formulated at state level. This suggests that public diplomacy may provide an effective political rationale for the inclusion of immigrant-origin artists where these lack the power or social standing to exert significant influence on public debates and policymaking.

In terms of resources, the arm's-length relationship between the Canada Council and the executive seems to have shielded the Equity Office from budgetary fluctuations, though its focus on ethnic minorities has been somewhat diluted by the expansion of its mandate to other disadvantaged groups. The Houses, which are directly subjected to political decisions, have enjoyed more generous but less predictable subsidies. The fact that their cultural activities are presented as a matter of economic and geopolitical strategy rather than morality has made cuts appear less problematic in times of economic crisis, but it has also allowed them to be viewed as a solution to the crisis itself. This has provided leverage to those focusing on large emerging markets for Spanish corporations, mainly in Asia and Latin America. The others, created as part of a progressive plan for reducing geopolitical tensions, underwent a sharp decline under conservative rule. A potential lesson to be learned is that public diplomacy approaches may be most beneficial for artists whose origin countries are perceived as important economic and geopolitical partners.

Procedurally, the social justice approach has espoused the methods of, and produced a ripple effect on, existing cultural policies, maintaining a strong focus on peer-assessed aesthetic merit. Meanwhile, the Houses have developed their own, pragmatic and informal criteria for selecting artists, remaining institutionally segregated from established arts funding bodies. Whether this can be seen as an absence of mainstreaming depends on the way in which cultural policy is defined. To the extent that the Houses have become arts venues in their own right, carving themselves a niche in large and mid-sized cities, it could be argued that traditional arts funding bodies have simply lost their monopoly on cultural policy. Of course, this would amount to lumping together aesthetically and instrumentally driven forms of state support for the arts, a conceptual step that one may be reluctant to take. Consistent with the general increase in market-oriented modes of governance, both the social justice and the public diplomacy approaches have entailed high levels of cooperation with private cultural organizations, but the first has mainly supported emerging non-profits, whereas the second has focused on consolidated firms.

With respect to outcomes, both institutions have contributed to diversify the cultural scene by promoting the dissemination of non-Western artistic practices among the general public. In this sense, they can be seen as potentially effective ways of improving citizens' attitudes toward stigmatized identities. However, the social justice approach has exclusively increased the exposure of immigrant-origin local artists, whereas the public diplomacy approach has also supported foreign ones. From the perspective of ethnic relations, both strategies entail certain opportunities and limitations. On the one hand, local artists can provide first-hand accounts of the immigration and integration experience, allowing their audience to empathize with other categories of newcomers. They also find themselves in a good position to merge or

dissolve cultures, unsettling entrenched dichotomies of insiders and outsiders. On the other hand, foreign creators can be perceived as more representative of their societies of origin, thus facilitating the generalization of positive attitudes to recent or prospective migrants coming from the same place. In the long run, however, foreign artists are likely to play a limited role in the local artistic scene, unless they become successful enough to draw an international audience.

Unfortunately, our data does not allow us to measure the extent to which artists have been encouraged to voice critical opinions or portray hybridized identities. *Ex hypothesi*, artistic freedom is likely to be closely correlated with the dispersion of cultural decision-making power, since any concentration will tend to privilege particular perspectives and styles. Diverse assessment committees, multiple sources of funding and collaboration with a range of cultural organizations can all contribute to this goal.

At the conceptual level, our findings challenge various assumptions and open up new analytical perspectives. For instance, the experience of the Equity Office suggests that there is no necessary incompatibility between the creation of specialized administrative units and the transformation of existing ones. However, bringing them together requires a clear training mandate and routine coordination. In this sense, it would be interesting to explore whether arts funding bodies are generally more inclined to embrace social justice than diplomatic missions, perhaps harder to reconcile with artists' professional ethics and self-understanding. Additional research could also elucidate whether the Office's recent turn to non-cultural minorities was due to multicultural scepticism among the conservatives or to a broader trend toward the combination of all equality policies within single agencies. The incipient articulation of culture and gender in Spanish law and policy, combined with the trimming of House budgets by Spanish conservatives, provide initial support for both hypotheses.

The dichotomy between mainstream and segregated cultural policy has also proved incapable of capturing the public diplomacy approach, which straddles and blurs a number of conceptual boundaries. Accounting for it obliges us to pay attention to new forms of state intervention in the artistic field that take place beyond traditional arts funding bodies and, indeed, beyond culture ministries. Moreover, it calls for an acknowledgement that artistic discourses are produced and disseminated in a number of physical and virtual locales, including some that are also used for other purposes, such as diplomatic offices and websites. These can hardly be labelled as artistic niches, for their intended audience is the general population, but nor do they fit common-sense conceptions of the mainstream cultural scene. In this context, the potential impact of cultural policies on ethnic relations might be better apprehended through the ‘bridging’ and ‘protective’ (or ‘bonding’) properties of a given artistic manifestation, provided these are not seen as mutually exclusive.

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¹ Documentary sources include annual reports and financial statements, strategic plans, founding regulations, funding calls, budgets, external evaluations and official websites. These will be mentioned in the text but, due to their high number (especially in the case of the Houses), not all of them are included in the list of references. Contact with officials took place during the course entitled 'Un vistazo al mundo de hoy y el posicionamiento de España. Una mirada desde la Red de Casas' imparted at Menéndez Pelayo International University, Santander, 31 August-4 September 2015.

² In 2013, around 14% of the Spanish population and 20% of the Canadian population was foreign born. In Spain, non-European immigrants mainly originated from Morocco, China and Colombia. In Canada, they came from the Philippines, India, China, Iran and Pakistan.

³ The Canada Council for the Arts (including the Equity Office) has recently conducted a major overhaul of its programmes and website. Therefore, this article should not be read as a precise description of the state of affairs at the time of its publication but as a synthesis of the main trends over the previous years.

⁴ Resolution of January 23, 2015, of the National Institute of Performing Arts and Music, calling for grant applications in dance, lyric and music for the year 2015; Resolution of January 23, 2015, of the National Institute of Performing Arts and Music, calling for grant applications in theater and circus during the year 2015.

⁵ Resolution of April 17, 2015, of the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts, calling for grant applications corresponding to the organization of film festivals and competitions in Spain during the year 2015; Resolution of April 10, 2015, of the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts, calling for grant applications corresponding to the production of projected and realized short films during the year 2015; Resolution of April 10, 2015, of the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts, calling for grant applications corresponding to the production of feature film projects in the year 2015.

⁶ Resolution of February 10, 2015, of the Secretary of State for Culture, calling for grant applications in book edition; Resolution of February 18, 2015, of the Ministry of Culture, calling for applications to FormARTE Scholarships for training and specialization in matters within the competence of cultural institutions operating under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport for the year 2015.

⁷ This figure corresponds to the sum of the budgeted 2015 grants of the Directorate-General for Cultural Policy and Industries and the Directorate-General of Fine Arts and Cultural Heritage and Archives and Libraries, the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts and the National Institute of Performing Arts and Music, as published in the Order ECD/413/2015, of 9 March, approving the annual granting programme of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport for the year 2015 and establishing measures to improve grant management and processing.

⁸ Such as Telefónica, Santander, BBVA, laCaixa, Gas Natural Fenosa, Iberdrola, ACS, Altadis, Abertis, Meliá Hoteles and Garrigues.

⁹ Based on the 2013 financial statements of America House (28 employees) and the 2014 statements of Sefarad-Israel Centre (13), Mediterranean House (7), Arab House (19), Africa House (22) and Asia House (28).